

CLERK: I have nothing further pending on the bill at this time, Mr. President.

SENATOR HALL: Senator McKenzie, on the motion to advance.

SENATOR MCKENZIE: Mr. President, I would move LB 907 be advanced to E & R Final.

SENATOR HALL: Thank you. The motion, the question is debatable. Senator Wesely, your light is first.

SENATOR WESELY: Thank you. Again, Mr. President and members, I hate to dwell on it, you know on its useful purpose, but I did support the Hudkins amendment. I did think it made the bill better, but I still oppose the bill. In looking at it further, in particular with Senator Hudkins' comments on the closing on her amendment, you know sometimes it does look ridiculous if somebody has a degree or they've got all this tremendous resume, but they can be as much a child abuser as anybody else. You know the cases of some of the wealthy families and some of the resultant tragedies that have occurred. Child abuse doesn't know any particular level of society, any particular level of income. It can happen anywhere at any time. And so by trying to throw up again the chilling impact that I talked about, we just heard it a minute ago with Senator Hudkins' comments, but you know, you know, you could be held for false report here, you know this restitution element is taken out of the bill, but the intent is to send that message that you will have to be careful before you make a report, and it is just the opposite of what we have been trying to do, and to say there is a protection here under our child abuse statutes that actually gives you immunity currently, unless you make a maliciously false report, to again try to encourage more people coming forward and letting us know if they suspect child abuse, and it is confidential, and until they find some ground, is not made public, and so nobody is harmed in terms of the public situation until there is some grounds to move forward. Now it may end up that nobody is actually prosecuted or whatever, but at the same time, I simply have to ask you to oppose the bill even with the amendment, which does improve upon it. There is something like 7,000 cases, 7,961 cases of child abuse investigated by the Department of Social Services in 1992. Out of those 7,961 cases, they substantiated 3,071 involving 5,262 children. Now that means that there were some 4,000 or almost 5,000 cases that were not substantiated. That doesn't mean there wasn't a